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**BRIEFING BY GENERAL ROMEO DALLAIRE,
FORMER COMMANDER OF UNAMIR IN RWANDA**

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 9:00 - 9:45 A.M.

General Romeo Dallaire, former commander of UNAMIR, presented an overview of the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Rwanda including historical problems, operational concerns and responsibility of the U.N. and sovereign states. Below is a summary of the major points presented:

Background:

After the Arusha accord was signed on August 4, 1993, a broad-based transitional government was to be established within 37 days, or by September 10. The transitional government was not in place until December 28. The lag time permitted various groups which were not supportive of the Arusha accord to pursue contrary agendas.

General Dallaire arrived in Rwanda on October 28, 1993. On April 6, he had some 2,500 troops on the ground, however only the Belgians, which were deployed to Kigali, had equipment, but insufficient ammunition. The Ghanaians, which were deployed to the DMZ in the north, did not have any peacekeeping equipment, although they had rifles and a few jeeps. Milles Collines Radio immediately held the Belgians responsible for shooting down the plane carrying President Habyarimana of Rwanda and President Ntaryamira of Burundi. Dallaire was forced to withdraw the Belgian force, as all Belgians were targeted by the government forces and the Interahamwe.

Dallaire's Commentary:

1) Dallaire said that the forces that he had on the ground on April 6 were insufficient to carry out the original UNAMIR mandate, much less take on additional responsibilities. They lacked manpower and proper equipment.

Dallaire suggested that the U.N. establish a "ready-to-go-force" that can immediately respond to such situations. He recommended that a camp be established where U.N. forces would receive training and remain at the ready.

2) The U.N. does not have the ability to respond quickly to crises, and won't have it until the sovereign states give the U.N. the necessary political and economic backing. The U.N. member states are withholding giving power to the U.N., he believes, in order to maintain their individual power.

3) Dallaire feels that the U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) should be given absolute authority by the U.N. and its member states to coordinate and direct the

international operation. The SRSG does not have such authority in Rwanda, and as a result, other member states and international organizations are able to pursue their own objectives apart from (and perhaps in opposition to) those of the collective operation. Mixed messages are sent by member nations.

4) After April 6, Dallaire felt that there was another game plan going on in the field that he was unable to identify, but he continually felt its presence and the obstacles it created.

5) The international community reacted in a "punctual" fashion to the crisis, rather than looking at the big picture. With the outpouring of Rwandan refugees to Goma in mid-July, the international community focused nearly exclusively on Goma -- which aided and abetted the majority of the Hutus responsible for the massacres -- and neglected the problems and needs of the displaced in the safe zone and others inside Rwanda. Dallaire tried to call the attention of the international community to the needs within the country, but the media placed the focus elsewhere. As a result, the ex-FAR has continued to solidify its base of support and undermine reconciliation, preventing the groundwork to be laid inside Rwanda to support a return to civil society.

Prospects for the Future Rwanda:

Dallaire criticized the international community for not being proactive. By taking such a long time to get UNAMIR up to full force and to come up with some solution for the security problems in Goma and the other camps, we are "lining ourselves up for another war." Dallaire fully believes that we, as an international community, should go into the camps and sort out the political and military situation.

Dallaire predicts that the Hutu-based former military of Rwanda is gearing up for a new offensive, which will probably begin in the form of cross-border raids until support for a broader-based military activity spreads. Although this offensive may not lead to a conflict of the size we have just witnessed, its potential cannot be underestimated, and would certainly work to destabilize the current government. Furthermore, in Burundi the numbers of hardline Hutus are increasing in the north of the country. Simultaneously, the Tutsi military is losing its strength and base of support as long-time Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Burundi return to Rwanda.